JUN 23 1949

9 No 5 (New Series No 11) April 1949

ANALYSIS

B

PERIODICAL ROOM
GENERAL LIBRARY
UNIV. OF MICH.

Edited by
Margaret Macdonald

with the advice of

A. J. Ayer
R. B. Braithwaite
Herbert Dingle
A. E. Duncan-Jones
C. A. Mace
A. M. MacIver
H. H. Price

CONTENTS

Note on Prospectus

A Note on Truth
J. F. THOMSON

Are Philosophical Theses Relative to Language?
L. JONATHAN COHEN

Concepts and Schematism
G. J. WARNOCK

Notes on back of cover

TWO SHILLINGS NET

Annual subscription 10s. 6d. post free for six numbers

SIL BLACKWELL · BROAD STREET · OXFORD

ANALYSIS 9 . 5 APRIL 1949

NOTE ON PROSPECTUS

With this number is enclosed a copy of a Prospectus stating the policy, present position and prospects of ANALYSIS. The fulfilment of the last, however, depends upon the co-operation of ANALYSIS readers. It is hoped that you will use the prospectus to recruit another subscriber to ANALYSIS. If every present subscriber were to succeed in doing this, the increased support would enable the journal to be permanently enlarged and improved. Please, therefore, pass the prospectus to a prospective subscriber and not to the fire or the waste paper basket.

A NOTE ON TRUTH

By J. F. THOMSON

IN this note I want to consider the question of the philosophical relevance of Tarski's semantic definition of truth. It will be convenient to discuss some remarks of Professor Max Black in a recent paper, *The Semantic Definition of Truth* (ANALYSIS Vol. 8, No. 4). Professor Black there concluded that the semantic definition was not a satisfactory philosophic reconstruction of pre-analytic usage, and his main reason appeared to be this :

When we read a semantic definition of ' true in L ' we see how the word ' true ' may be eliminated from certain specified contexts. But as a result of reading it we seem to understand what Black calls ' the principle of the definition' ; and as the result of this, to see how the word ' true ' may be eliminated from *all* contexts of a certain kind. For example : if we understand a semantic definition of ' true in English ' we understand also how the word ' true ' would be used in the meta-language of French, without being given a semantic definition of ' true in French '. This may give us the impression that we understand rather more about the use of ' true ' than any semantic definition can give us to understand, and consequently that the semantic technique for defining ' true ' does not provide an adequate philosophic reconstruction of our usage.

Thus Professor Black remarks :

' We seem to see quite clearly that what Tarski is doing is so to define truth *that to assert that a sentence is true is logically equivalent to asserting that sentence*. And in doing so we feel that we

understand the definition, besides being able to apply it. But if we try to say what we think we understand, we sin at once against the canons of syntactical propriety.[1]

And:

'No account of the semantic approach to the definition of truth can be regarded as satisfactory which prevents us from saying what we undoubtedly understand from the exposition of the theory'.[2]

Professor Black's puzzle can be put another way, as follows. Consider the following sentences:

(1) 'London is a city' is true ≡ London is a city.

(2) 'Thame is a market town' is true ≡ Thame is a market town.

(3) 'California is a state' is true ≡ California is a state; and so on.

I shall call these T-sentences. If we are told that such sentences exemplify the correct use of 'true', then we either know or seem to know that every T-sentence is itself true. This constitutes our understanding of the pre-analytic usage of which a philosophic reconstruction is required. But when we try to say what we know or seem to know, we talk nonsense. We can, of course, effect an enumeration of T-sentences, reciting each in turn; to do this is virtually to give a semantic definition of 'true in English'. But this, Professor Black thinks, doesn't do justice to what we know; what we require is a general definition of truth, equivalent to what Black calls 'the principle of the [semantic] definition.'

I shall first show how this puzzle arises. It can be remarked at once that when we read a list of T-sentences there *is* something that we understand, which *is* expressible without sinning against the canons of syntactic propriety, viz:

(4) $(x)\,(y)\,(z)$ if x is a sentence and y designates x and if z is got by writing first y and then 'is true', then x and z are materially equivalent.

It is easy to show that this formula is legitimate. 'London is a city' is a sentence, and "London is a city", is its name. If you write first "London is a city" and then 'is true' what you write is "London is a city" 'is true'. This is in fact true and so is 'London is a city'. Thus they are materially equivalent. This of course is *not* a definition of truth. It can't be regarded as providing a means for the elimination of the phrase 'is true' since this phrase is not used in the formula. (It is mentioned). We see this by reflecting that the phrase which is mentioned might well mean what is meant by 'is a sentence asserted by

[1] Ib., p. 58. [2] p. 60.

Jones on his birthday'. Further: 'materially equivalent' is itself defined in terms of 'true'.

Nevertheless, since we do notice that this formula holds, and since it is expressible, we may confuse what we notice with the 'principle of the definition' or with a general definition of truth; and since the one is expressible and the other not, we may suppose that the latter *ought to be* expressible and that it is only some quite fortuitous and accidental peculiarity of our symbolism that prevents us from expressing it.

There is, however, another mistake which we can make which may lead us to suppose that a general definition of truth ('the principle of the definition') ought to be forthcoming. It is the mistake which Professor Black makes when he says:

"We seem to see quite clearly that what Tarski is doing is so to define truth *that to assert that a sentence is true is logically equivalent to asserting that sentence*". I object here to '*logically* equivalent'; the italicised clause is not, as Professor Black supposes, nonsense: it is simply false. Suppose that we were rather ignorant about the theory of numbers and that someone told us:

(5) 43 ∈ Prime ≡ any number that divides 43 is either 43 or 1.

We *might* suppose that it just *was* the case that either 43 was prime and any number etc., or 43 wasn't prime and some number, etc. But we *almost certainly would* suppose that (5) was a consequence of some definition of 'prime' (whatever *that* meant); and we should then say that (5) exhibited a logical equivalence between '43 ∈ Prime' and 'any number, etc.' And we should suppose this because we shouldn't think it a coincidence that in (5) 43 is mentioned on the left of '≡', and the class of primes is mentioned on the left of '≡', and then 43 is mentioned again on the right of '≡' but the class of primes isn't. For if on the other hand we had been told that

(6) 43 ∈ prime ≡ Ramanujan is dead.

we would *not* suppose that there was any general formula of which *this* was a consequence. Now we may suppose that the condition which is fulfilled for (5) and not for (6) is fulfilled for (1) and the other T-sentences, and thus that T-sentences exemplify some relation of logical equivalence. But this is a mistake. In (1) 'London is a city' is true ≡ London is a city, London and the class of cities are mentioned on the RHS of '≡' but two quite *different* things, a sentence and the class of true sentences, are mentioned on the LHS. Why in fact then do we accept (1) as true? Because of course we suppose that "London is a city" is being used as the name of the sentence 'London is a city'. That is, because we suppose that the sentence mentioned on the LHS of '≡' is the same sentence as

that which is used on the RHS. And this is *almost* certainly what we are intended to understand when (1) is asserted. But whoever asserts (1) cannot *tell* us what to suppose in this matter.

This can be put in another way. We suppose (1) to be a sentence of a meta-language for which there is (the correct use of which is characterised by the observance of) a designation-rule to the effect that " London is a city " is the name of the sentence ' London is a city '. But (1) does not tell us this nor can it do so.

And if by a ' logical equivalence ' we understand an expression containing some symbol such that when that symbol is replaced in that expression by its definition the resulting expression has the form

$$p \equiv p,$$

then Tarski does *not* so define truth as to make, say;

' The Amazon is a river ' is true.

logically equivalent to

The Amazon is a river.

For from Black's model we have

(7) ' RA ' ϵ True $\equiv$ df. RA ϵ Sentence. *ra*[1]

But this does not tell us that ' RA ' is the name of the sentence '*ra*'. Nor can it do so. For in saying of some symbol that it is the name of a sentence we mention that symbol and hence use *its* name. Of course it has been stated previously that ' RA ' is to be the name of '*ra*'. But this has been laid down in the language in which we speak of "RA " and other symbols of the meta-language, *viz.* in the meta-meta-language, and we cannot make explicit these meta-meta-linguistic rules in the meta-linguistic definition of ' true '. For suppose we have

(8) If " RA " is the name of '*ra*' then if RA is a sentence RA is true $\equiv$ *ra.*

If anyone had refused to admit (7) because it wasn't explicit in (7) how ' RA ' was being used, he wouldn't be satisfied by (8); he would refuse to accept (8) because it isn't made explicit in (8) how " RA " is being used.

It may be objected at this point that

(5) 43 ϵ prime $\equiv$ etc.

doesn't *tell* us how the word ' prime ' is to be used. But this is irrelevant. For we could if we chose eliminate ' prime ' from our object language altogether: it occurs in that language as a convenient abbreviation for the object language symbol " the class of numbers whose only divisors are themselves and 1." But ' true ' occurs in the meta-language not as the defined equivalent of other symbols in the meta-language but as predicate of sentences in the object language.

[1] Ib., p. 53.

It should now be clear that the conditions in virtue of which we expect (5) to be the consequence of a general formula are lacking in (1) and the other T-sentences. And this being so we have no good reason to expect a general definition of truth. But in any case it should also be clear just why we cannot have a general definition. We have seen that every T-sentence exemplifies, but does not make explicit, a rule of designation. (This is shorthand for " every T-sentence is accepted on the supposal that it is in a language for which there is, in the appropriate meta-meta-language, a rule of designation whereby the symbol which is used to mention a sentence is the name of the sentence which itself is used "). And every individual T-sentence exemplifies a rule of designation peculiar to itself. Now we agree to:

(5) 43 ϵ prime $\equiv$ any number etc.

because we know how ' prime ' is being used. And what we know is expressed in the general formula

(9) $(x)\ x \epsilon$ prime $\equiv (y)$ if y divides x then y is x or 1.

which is the definition of ' prime '.

And part of the reason we agree to (1) is that we know how ' is true ' is being used. But another part of the reason is that we pre-suppose the appropriate rule of designation. If we could make this rule of designation explicit in (1) we should be able to generalise upon the result and produce a generalised definition. But, as I have shown above, we cannot do this. And hence we cannot have a general definition of truth.

The question, ' is the semantic definition of truth acceptable ? ' is therefore otiose. If we want a definition, this is the only sort of definition we can have. And it is precisely in this that its philosophic relevance to the traditional problem of truth lies. By a partial formalization of our meta-language we can show how the word ' true ' is to be used ; we do this by showing how certain meta-linguistic sentences containing the name of an object sentence and the phrase ' is true ' may be replaced by the appropriate object sentences. In most discourse we do not make the appropriate rules of designation explicit : we exemplify them, and in so doing we speak English correctly. But we could make them explicit if we wished.

But there is a large class of contexts of ' true ' in which it would not be convenient to lay down rules for the replacement of sentence-designations by object sentences ; and these contexts are just those contexts in which ' true ' is used in ordinary discourse. No-one would normally ask himself

" Is the sentence ' London is a city ' true? "

But we might ask (for example)

" Is Smith's theory about dogs true? "

And if we ask ourselves this it is as a prolegomenon to asking ourselves just what Smith's theory amounts to, or how it is to be understood. And to ask this is to ask ourselves how it could be tested, what evidence could be adduced for it—in short, to ask ourselves what are the conditions under which we would say it was true. Perhaps, after analysis and investigation, we might come to the point of triumphantly reciting certain object-sentences about dogs. But until we knew exactly which object-sentences we wanted to recite we should find the symbol 'true' indispensable.

In short, in its characteristic use, the symbol 'true' allows us to raise questions about sentences which are not yet specified or specifiable. If we knew exactly what object-sentences we wanted to regard 'Kant's theory about schematism' or 'Freud's theory of the super ego' as designating, we could eliminate this use of 'true'. Now in a formalised language there are no puzzles of this sort: the cartographer takes over where the explorer leaves off. And so it is hardly surprising that Tarski's work contributes nothing to the problems that philosophers have worried about. In a sense then the semantic definition has no philosophical relevance at all. But just this *is* its relevance; that it may so lead philosophers to see that their worries are not about truth but about understanding.

University College, London.

ARE PHILOSOPHICAL THESES RELATIVE TO LANGUAGE?[1]

By L. JONATHAN COHEN

IT used to be said by Rudolf Carnap that all philosophical theses are relative to language.[2] I shall try to show that for at least one common sense of the word 'language' this opinion is demonstrably incorrect. The sense of 'language' for which it is incorrect is the sense in which that word is used in expressions like 'English language' or 'French language'—the sense in which 'language' means the same as 'natural language'. And I shall argue that its incorrectness is shown by the translatability of philosophical theses from one natural language to another.

By saying that all philosophical theses are relative to language Carnap meant that any philosophical thesis refers to

[1] I wish to express my thanks to Mr. Peter Heath and to the Editor of ANALYSIS for several helpful criticisms.

[2] *Philosophy and Logical Syntax*. 1935, p. 78.

what he called the 'transformation rules' of one or several language-systems and that it is therefore incomplete unless it states the language-system(s) to which it refers. And he gave as an example of a complete philosophical thesis 'In the language-system of Peano numerical expressions are elementary expressions':[1] i.e. he took this to be the statement of a transformation rule of Peano's language-system. Thus, too, for Carnap the rule that from "All A are B" and "All B are C" we may infer "All A are C" was a transformation rule of the English language.[2] Moreover, so far as what are normally called 'rules of grammar' do not concern the individual meaning of words he called them 'formation rules'. Thus a formation rule of the English language determines, for instance, that a series of four words (article, substantive, verb and adjective) constitutes a sentence.[3] And he held that "between logic and grammar, or in other words, between the transformation rules and the formation rules, there is no fundamental difference".[4] I hope to show that this last statement is in error, because philosophical theses are not relative to language in the same sense of 'language' as grammatical theses are so relative.

Let us now consider the question "Can a philosophical thesis be translated?" By 'can' here I mean the 'can' of logical possibility, as in the questions "Can sense-contents be counted?" "Can the Absolute be lazy?" or "Can a proposition be neither true nor false?" And I use 'translate' in the everyday non-technical sense in which a school-master might say "'I came, I saw, I conquered' is the English translation of the Latin sentence 'Veni, vidi, vici'". This is the kind of translation from one natural language to another that interpreters do at international conferences, or that Scott-Moncrieff did for Proust. In order not to beg any questions, therefore, we shall have to ask ourselves whether, in English, a sentence like the following makes sense:—"The English translation from the original German of paragraph 3.328 of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* is:—'If a sign is not necessary it is meaningless. That is the meaning of Occam's razor'".

It does seem to be a fact that people try to translate the whole of what are generally regarded as wholly or partially philosophical works. Jowett tried to translate Plato's *Dialogues*, for instance, and C. K. Ogden tried to translate Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. Moreover, the latter discusses his translation in a prefatory note (page 5) written in English which does not seem at all difficult to understand and is certainly not nonsensical or absurd. And Wittgenstein himself, for instance, seems to treat Occam's

[1] Ib. p. 77. [2] Ib., p. 43. [3] Ib., p. 41. [4] Ib., p. 47.

razor—a Latin sentence—both as a sentence of philosophical importance and as a translatable sentence (3.328). No doubt something would be lost in any translation of a philosophical sentence, just as something is lost in any translation of Homer, and these losses may differ in kind from one another. But it does not seem nonsense to say, in English, "The works of Plato, Kant, Wittgenstein and many other foreign philosophers have been translated into English", any more than it is nonsense to say "The works of Homer, Virgil, Dante and many other foreign poets have been translated into English". Accordingly, the correct answer to the question "Can a philosophical thesis be translated?" seems to be "Yes, it can". Of course, there may in practice be many difficulties to be met in carrying out such translations. It might be very difficult to translate Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* into some Polynesian languages, and I believe that so little is known about Minoan that it is at the moment in fact impossible to translate anything into it. But the logical possibility remains, for it does not make nonsense to discuss such a translation.

I shall now try to show that, if some philosophical theses were relative to natural language, as Carnap suggested, they would not be translatable from one natural language to another, in the way that they seem to be. If they were relative to natural language, they would be incomplete unless they stated the natural language to which they referred. The thesis "From 'All A are B' and 'All B are C' we may infer 'All A are C'," for instance, would be incomplete; and its complete form would be "'It is a transformation rule of the English language that from 'All A are B' and 'All B are C' we may infer 'All A are C'". But anyone who thinks about translating the whole of this sentence into, say, French will immediately discern the impossibility of so doing. Any attempt to translate the whole of the thesis into French would involve the absurdity of treating "Tous les A sont B", for instance, as a sentence of the English language.

This untranslatability of theses which are relative—in Carnap's sense—to natural language may be seen with particular clarity in the case of dictionary definitions. Some dictionaries, like Webster's or Suidas', list synonyms in one natural language for words in the same language, and others, like Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon, give synonyms in one natural language for the words of another. We could derive a Greek-English dictionary from Suidas' by translating his synonyms into English and leaving the other Greek words as they stand. But that would not be a translation of his dictionary

as a whole. We could derive a Greek-French dictionary from Liddell and Scott's by translating the English words in it into French and leaving the Greek words as they stand. But, again, that would not be a translation of their dictionary as a whole. In neither of these cases would we have translated the definitions as a whole, but only some of the words occurring in them. If we translated all the Greek words in Suidas' dictionary into their commonest English equivalents according to Liddell and Scott's Lexicon we should produce something which would be a peculiar kind of nonsense, unless we regarded it as the dictionary of an artificial language, the words of which were all defined in terms of ordinary English. Of course, if there were a complete parallelism—which there certainly is not—between ancient Greek and modern English, the result would be an English dictionary. But in either case it would be improper to call this result " a translation of the original definitions ". The words have been translated but not the definitions. A definition in Suidas' dictionary is a sentence expressing what Suidas thinks is a correct account of some particular usage in the Greek language. But a sentence recording some particular usage in an artificial language or in the English language would be an incorrect translation of such a definition, simply because it would not concern Greek but English or an artificial language. And it seems, accordingly, that dictionary definitions are sentences which it is logically impossible to translate correctly from one natural language to another. In fact it seems that nobody ever does try to carry out such translations, nor do people normally talk about them. And I am suggesting that it would also be absurd to talk about them, because in English we can call a definition-sentence a ' dictionary definition ' only if there is an explicit or implicit reference in it to the particular natural language which it concerns or if this is indicated by its context. Dictionary definitions are untranslatable because they are relative to natural language.

I do not wish to deny that books called ' dictionaries ' may often be used as encyclopaedias. We may discover from such a book, for instance, the zoological fact that dodos are now extinct, as well as the definition of the English word ' dodo '. Moreover, this zoological fact could equally well be found in a book written in, say, French or German, whether the book be called ' encyclopaedia ' or ' dictionary '. So that the encyclopaedia element in books called ' dictionaries ' is as much translatable as any work of empirical science. But what I wish to insist is that so far as we treat a sentence in such a book as a dictionary definition we must treat it as untranslatable. In other

words, so far as we are *mentioning* the English word ' dodo ', for instance, and not *using* it, that word at least cannot be translated.

It should now be clear that Carnap was in error when he asserted that there was no fundamental difference between philosophy and grammar. Grammatical theses are relative to natural language; and, whenever one of them *mentions* an expression in that language to which it is relative, this expression at least forms an untranslatable element in the thesis. Take, for instance, the thesis " It is a formation rule of the English language that a series of four words (article, substantive, verb, adjective), like ' The cat is black ', constitutes a sentence ". Here the expression within single quotation-marks cannot be translated into any other natural language, even if the rest of the thesis were so translated, for it would not then be an example of an English sentence. But—and this is what constitutes a fundamental difference between philosophy and grammar—when philosophical theses *mention* an expression there is nothing to prevent that expression's being translated along with the rest of the thesis. You can find, for instance, books about the rules of Aristotelian logic written in many different natural languages and all using the same example for a syllogism in Barbara, " All men are mortal . . . "; and this example is translated along with the rest of the text in each case. So far as philosophical theses are translatable in this way, it seems reasonable to claim that they are not relative to natural language in the way that dictionary definitions and grammatical theses are relative.

Carnap's error—now widely acknowledged as such—in underestimating the difference between philosophy and grammar has done much to bring the treatment of philosophy as the critique of language into the disrepute of verbalism. And it is clear that this error is at least in part due to a confusion of the sense of the English word ' language ' in which we use it when saying, for instance, " Japanese is a difficult language to learn ", with the quite different sense in which it is used (like the phrases ' system of thought ' or ' universe of discourse ') in expressions such as ' the language of Peano ', ' the language of 17th century physics ', ' the language of Kantian philosophy ' or ' the language of modern politics ', which are employed where it makes no difference what natural language or notation was or is used by the mathematicians, physicists, philosophers or politicians, respectively. The latter usage of ' language ' is vaguer than the ' natural language ' usage, in that it is probably much more difficult to list all such specialist languages as now exist than it is for philologists to list all contemporary natural languages. And it is at least arguable that in this sense of ' language ' some

or all philosophical theses are relative with regard to language, for their translatability from one natural language to another does not preclude *this* kind of relativity. I take it, for instance, that Collingwood, in his *Essay on Metaphysics*, may be regarded as having argued that metaphysics is the science of the relativity-to specialist-language of what he called 'absolute presuppositions', like 'All events have causes'. On his view no metaphysical thesis about any of these is complete unless it begins with what he calls a 'metaphysical rubric' (p. 55)—a reference to some particular specialist language.

Finally, someone might ask me: "Do you intend your own thesis—on the non-relativity-to-natural-language of philosophical theses—to be itself a philosophical thesis?" To this question I should have to answer 'No'. I could not set out my thesis as a genuine philosophical thesis without assuming the very point at issue. I have, accordingly, tried to argue as if Carnap were correct and so I have specifically appealed to English usage, the usage of a natural language. As this usage does not justify Carnap's assertion I consider that assertion disproved and my thesis proved by a *reductio ad absurdum*—but only so far as English is concerned. To do the job thoroughly I should have to make a long series of such reductions in all known natural languages. But I have no doubt that the result would be the same in each case.

University of Edinburgh.

CONCEPTS AND SCHEMATISM

By G. J. WARNOCK

I WANT in this note to suggest how something intelligible can be said about Kant's notion of Schematism of the Categories, or 'pure concepts'. The attempt to see what, if anything, is here being discussed involves (1) a brief glance at a standard sort of talk about 'having concepts', and at a certain method of translating this dangerous terminology, and (2) an examination of the question *about* concepts which the doctrine of Schematism is supposed to answer. The characteristic difficulty in the second section is to decide whether, in this particular instance, Kant is making some genuine point in peculiar language, or whether his peculiar language has lured him into nonsense. If, of course, the latter were the case, his statements would not be capable of any useful translation; they would disintegrate under treatment.

I

(1) A specimen of a standard use of 'concept'—no doubt there are also other and queerer uses—is as follows:—I am looking at a collection of golf-balls, all of which are white; I then intuit, am acquainted with (etc.), the white golf-balls[1]; but I do not *know that* they are white, unless I have the concept of whiteness, and apply it to the golf-balls. "Intuitions without concepts are blind".

If we take it that a concept is an object designated by the noun 'concept', we compare the above specimen with something of this sort:—I am looking at a pair of knitting-needles, size 9; but I do not *know that* they are size 9, unless I have a graduated gauge, and apply it to the needles. And this suggests a variety of impossible questions: e.g., what concepts (gauges) have I got?—to be answered presumably by inspection of my mind. Where did I get them from? Where are they now? If in my mind, how can I *apply* them to external objects? In any case, how could I apply them unless I had the concept of application, and applied that?—how do I *begin?* We might even ask whether there are concepts which no-one has ever had, or which do not apply to anything at all. And so on.

(2) A common suggestion of how to avoid these perplexities can be put as follows:—'Concept' is not, as 'gauge' is, the name of an object which I can acquire, inspect, carry about, apply by a simple manipulation, etc. "I have the concept of whiteness" means the same as "I know how to use 'white'"; and if we say this, we shall not have to *ask* a lot of questions which we cannot answer, or properly understand.

(3) This suggestion is, on the whole, meritorious; but I think it will gain in force, if we see that it is not so simple and tidy as it looks. I have three points to make.

(*a*) Obviously, I may not speak English; if I do not use 'white', but use 'albus' instead, surely I have the concept of whiteness, or at least a concept which is *the same* as the concept of whiteness.

This might be answered as follows:—Certainly you have the concept of whiteness, if you use 'albus' in the same way as 'white' is used; to have the same concept is not necessarily to use the very same word, but to have the very same use for *some* word. Supposing that we have criteria for sameness of use, this amendment frees us from restriction to any one language.

(*b*) But now suppose a more complicated case.[2] Suppose

[1] Some would say, 'appearances of' them, sense-data, etc.

[2] This is a case which I have heard discussed in lectures by Miss G. E. M. Anscombe; the treatment of it here is, however, my own.

that the inhabitants of some remote land use a word ' nop ' in (so far as we can discover) exactly the way in which we use ' white ' ; all nop things are white, and vice-versa ; they decide whether objects are nop by looking at them in a good light, and so on. But we find that they have no equivalents at all for ' red ', ' green ', ' yellow ', etc., and none for ' colour '. If they have thus no concepts of other colours, and none of colour in general, should we say with any confidence that ' nop '-users really have the concept of whiteness, the same concept that we have ? *Ex hypothesi*, ' nop ' and ' white ' satisfy our criteria for sameness of use ; but since ' nop ' is not, as ' white ' is, a member of a *range* of colour-words, and cannot be classified as a colour-word at all, we might be inclined to doubt whether its use could possibly refer to the same thing that we refer to by using ' white '; we doubt whether the concepts are really the same.

This is not a special difficulty for the concept-terminology ; the question, whether ' white ' and ' nop ' mean the same, is just as baffling ; so that, even if we seek criteria for sameness of (or having) concepts in sameness of (or knowing) the use of words, there are still situations where no confident decision is possible—no doubt inevitably. We *could*, perhaps, make some rather vague stipulation, e.g. that if two languages are, in certain ways, *too* unlike each other, we shall not say that users of the different languages have the same concepts. This is to connect the concepts that we have with the language we use, not with particular uses of particular words ; and clearly there is much more to be said about it.

(*c*) So far, we have taken for granted that statements about having concepts are to be translated into statements about knowing how to use words. But is this correct ? Are we prepared to maintain that where there is no use of language there are no concepts, or even that, unless I can *say* something, I cannot *know* anything? Suppose that I repeatedly present a monkey with a collection of bricks all of various colours, but indistinguishable in shape, weight, texture, and smell ; and suppose that the monkey carefully picks out all the white bricks and arranges them separately. Then, though the monkey does not use ' white ', or *any* words, ought we not to say that it has the concept of whiteness?

Compare the following case : If I once possessed a complete bicycle, and later lost both its wheels, have I or have I not got a bicycle now? To say flatly that I have, suggests (wrongly) that my possessions now include wheels ; to say flatly that I have not, suggests (wrongly) that I have not even got the handle-bars and frame. The monkey does a *part* of what a person

might do, of whom we should say unhesitatingly that he had the concept; but not the whole, e.g. it does not answer questions, obey verbal orders, or explain its *reason* for picking out just those objects. If we say it has *not* got the concept, we may make its behaviour seem mysterious and 'inexplicable'; if we say that it *has*, we shall be tempted to suppose that more is going on than we have any right to assume, e.g. that the monkey *somehow* explains to itself the reason for its behaviour, though not in language.[1] The fact is, I think, that, without using language, the *usual* criteria for having a concept are not applicable at all; I suggest, therefore, that we decide to maintain that having concepts presupposes knowing a language—with the reservation that something more or less *like* having concepts may occur where no language is used, where full-blown talk about concepts would be inappropriate.

I have now said enough about concepts to sharpen the particular issues in the second section.

II

(1) Kant begins his section on Schematism with a question—'How is the *subsumption* of intuitions under pure concepts, the *application* of a category to appearances, possible?'[2]

If we now apply our translation, this at once looks silly; it seems that Kant is simply misled by his concept-language. We observe that if I cannot *apply* a concept then I have not *got* it. If I have a gauge, I can sensibly ask how to use it, how to apply it; but to ask how I can apply a concept that I have, is to ask how I can use a word that I know how to use. And this is a silly question, brought on by illegitimately separating the application of concepts from having them.

This, however, cannot be right. Kant supposes that the problem of schematism concerns the 'pure' concepts only; and this special perplexity cannot be attributed to a quite *general* confusion. In the application of *some* concepts Kant finds no difficulty; perhaps, then, his special question about 'pure' concepts may be genuine, and answerable.

(2) (*a*) An empirical concept, Kant says (A 137), is 'homogeneous' with the things that it applies to. This suggests the nonsense-view that (say) roundness is round; but I think Kant's point is only that the roundness of a thing is a sensible ('intuitable') *characteristic* of it—I can *see* that a thing is round, and can

[1] If we replace the monkey by a deaf and dumb (language-less) man, *because* he is a man, the case will be more complicated.

[2] Critique of Pure Reason, A 138 : B 177.

be taught to use ' round ' by having round things *pointed out* to me ; that is, I can easily be taught to apply the concept of roundness.

(This will not, of course, do for *all* empirical concepts. At least on Kant's view, what I intuit is an appearance ; the concept of an *object*, then, cannot be ' homogeneous ' with what I intuit. Kant is obliged to admit this in A 141, where it seems that the concept of Dog needs to be schematised ; and what about Republicanism, Evolution, or Entropy?)

(*b*) ' Pure ' concepts, unlike (some) empirical concepts, are said to be ' heterogeneous ' with the things they apply to ; that is, we may at least conclude that they are meant to be somehow different. And this is true. Consider the ' pure concepts ' of Unity, Causality, and Possibility ; then substitute ' one ', ' cause ', and ' possible '. Clearly, " This is one " (if allowed at all) is not like " This is white " ; " This is the cause " is not like " This is the football " ; a possible President does not, at the moment of electoral triumph, lose one characteristic, possibility, and acquire a new one, actuality. What is referred to by ' one ', or ' cause ', or ' possible ', is in no case a thing that I can look at, point to, ' intuit ' ; I cannot, then, learn to use these words in the same way as I learn to use ' white ' or ' round '.

Perhaps, then, Kant's question " How is it possible to apply pure concepts? " may be put as follows : " How do we learn to use words, for which the complete conditions of their correct use cannot be exhibited by the act (or any sequence of acts) of pointing to something that we intuit? "[1] And this question is, at least, intelligible.

(3) But if this is (or ' really ' is) Kant's question, he fails to answer it. His language is bewilderingly vague, but his doctrine can, I think, be boiled down as follows :—In learning to use a word of this sort (to ' apply a pure concept '), a special, extra step is necessary ; I must learn a rule for constructing in imagination some sort of model, which illustrates, or is an imagined case of, what the concept applies to. An image *alone* will not do, since no *single* thing can ever completely show the use of a pure concept (or of, e.g. the word ' cause ') ; I must learn a rule for *constructing* my illustrative model. " This representation of a universal procedure of imagination in providing an image for a concept, I entitle the schema of this concept ". (A 140).

But how could this procedure possibly help? No doubt, if

[1] I have already noted that Kant ought to ask this about empirical concepts which are not, like roundness, whiteness, etc., ' of ' sensible characteristics.

we think that the concept is 'in the mind', it may seem that an imagined model, also in the mind, would be a useful stepping-stone; that it would show me what to look out for when I venture with my concept into the alien, intractable 'external world'. But clearly, if my rule tells me how to construct a model in my head, it also tells me how, with sufficient ingenuity, to construct it out of cardboard or wire or plasticine; its being in my head, and not at my elbow, is a quite irrelevant circumstance. And it is now clear that, if I can understand my rule, and so understand what my illustrative model is *for*, I have *already* 'applied the concept'—namely to the model. But I must in this case have applied it *without* the rule and the model; if so, they are unnecessary; I may find a model helpful, e.g. as a simple specimen, or a reminder, but it cannot be used to *explain* how it is that I can apply the concept. I cannot understand how a model illustrates causality, unless I already know how 'cause' is is used.

Finally, in case this discussion seems impiously new-fangled, I should point out that its conclusion, at least, is more than forty years old. Prichard, in *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*, p. 255, writes "We see that the process [schematism] said to be necessary because a certain other process is impossible is the very process said to be impossible". I suggest that Kant missed this through supposing that a process 'in the mind' can somehow *explain* the same process in the world of objects.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.